



How to Read Chinese Poetry Podcast

Topic 2 *The Book of Poetry* and Diplomacy

Guest Host: Wai-ye Li (Harvard University)

Episode 4 Who is the Barbarian?

I. Text

Blue Flies 青蠅

Buzzing blue flies

Gather on the fence.

Joyous and civil is the noble man:

He does not believe in words of slander.

Buzzing blue flies

Gather at the brambles.

The slander-mongers know no limit,

And wreak havoc in domain on four sides.

Buzzing blue flies

Gather at the thickets.

The slander-mongers know no limits,

And sow discord between you and me.

yíng yíng qīng yíng
營營青蠅

zhǐ yú fán
止于樊

kǎi tì jūn zǐ
豈弟君子

wú xìn chán yán
無信讒言

yíng yíng qīng yíng
營營青蠅

zhǐ yú jí
止于棘

chán rén wǎng jí
讒人罔極

jiāo luàn sì guó
交亂四國

yíng yíng qīng yíng
營營青蠅

zhǐ yú zhēn
止于榛

chán rén wǎng jí
讒人罔極

gòu wǒ èr rén
構我二人

[Translated by Wai-ye Li]

The poem read in Mandarin by Zhao Sikun

II. Episode Notes

- *Zuozhuan* or the *Zuo Tradition* 左傳
- *fushi* 賦詩, a certain person chants or recites a certain a poem
- *ba* 霸, overlord or hegemon, often the leader of an alliance
- Jin 晉, one of the most powerful states during the Spring and Autumn Period and the leader of various alliances
- Fan Xuanzi 范宣子 (Fan Gai 范匄, d. 548 BCE), chief minister in Jin
- Juzhi 駒支, leader of the Rong barbarians

III. Textual Source

Wai-yee Li. "Poetry and Diplomacy in *Zuo Tradition (Zuozhuan)*." In *How to Read Chinese Poetry in Context: Poetic Culture from Antiquity Through the Tang*, ed. Zong-qi Cai. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018, pp. 13-29, especially 13-17.

